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Construction Managers plan and organize construction projects. Depending on their situation or employer, they are also known as constructors, construction superintendents, general superintendents, project engineers, project managers, general construction managers, or executive construction managers. Construction Managers may own a construction management or contracting firm, or may work as an employee of the owner, developer, contractor, or management firm overseeing the construction project. They may plan and supervise the entire project or just a part of a project. Managers often work with engineers, architects, contractors, and others who are involved in the construction project.

Large construction projects such as an office building or industrial complex are often too complicated for one person to manage. These projects are divided into many segments: site preparation including land clearing and earth moving; sewage systems; landscaping and road construction; building construction including excavation and laying grounds, as well as erection of structural framework, floors, walls, and roofs; and building systems including fire-protection, electrical, plumbing, air-conditioning, and heating. Construction Managers may manage one or more of these segments.

Tasks

- ▶ Confer with supervisory personnel, owners, contractors, and design professionals to discuss and resolve matters such as work procedures, complaints, and construction problems.
- ▶ Plan, organize, and direct activities concerned with the construction and maintenance of structures, facilities, and systems.
- ▶ Schedule the project in logical steps and budget time required to meet deadlines.
- ▶ Determine labor requirements and dispatch workers to construction sites.
- ▶ Inspect and review projects to monitor compliance with building and safety codes, and other regulations.
- ▶ Interpret and explain plans and contract terms to administrative staff, workers, and clients, representing the owner or developer.
- ▶ Prepare contracts and negotiate revisions, changes and additions to contractual agreements with architects, consultants, clients, suppliers and subcontractors.
- ▶ Obtain all necessary permits and licenses.

Construction Managers

Construction Careers

- ▶ Direct and supervise workers.
- ▶ Study job specifications to determine appropriate construction methods.
- ▶ Select, contract, and oversee workers who complete specific pieces of the project, such as painting or plumbing.

Detailed descriptions of this occupation may be found in the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) at online.onetcenter.org.

Important Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities

- ▶ Reading Comprehension — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents.
- ▶ Critical Thinking — Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
- ▶ Coordination — Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
- ▶ Instructing — Teaching others how to do something.
- ▶ Active Listening — Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- ▶ Building and Construction — Knowledge of materials, methods, and the tools involved in the construction or repair of houses, buildings, or other structures such as highways and roads.
- ▶ Design — Knowledge of design techniques, tools, and principles involved in production of precision technical plans, blueprints, drawings, and models.
- ▶ Mathematics — Knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, calculus, statistics, and their applications.
- ▶ Public Safety and Security — Knowledge of relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
- ▶ Administration and Management — Knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
- ▶ Customer and Personal Service — Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- ▶ Problem Sensitivity — The ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
- ▶ Information Ordering — The ability to arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).

Work Environment

Construction Managers oversee overall construction projects from an off-site main office or out of a field office at the construction site. Managers travel when the construction site is out of state or when they are responsible for two or more sites. Managers usually take up temporary foreign residence when projects take place in other countries.

Construction Managers

Although the work, as a rule, is not unusually dangerous, Construction Managers must be careful while performing on-site services, where conditions can be hazardous, with tools, building materials, or debris scattered about and underfoot.

Most Construction Managers work a 40-hour week but can be “on call” for 24 hours a day in order to be available to deal with delays, bad weather, or emergencies at the site.

California’s Job Outlook and Wages

The California Outlook and Wage table below represents the occupation across all industries.

Standard Occupational Classification	Estimated Number of Workers 2004	Estimated Number of Workers 2014	Average Annual Openings	2006 Wage Range (per hour)
Construction Managers				
11-9021	35,400	41,100	1,210	\$33.39 to \$53.04

Wages do not reflect self-employment.

Average annual openings include new jobs plus net replacements.

Source: www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov, Employment Projections by Occupation and OES Employment & Wages by Occupation, Labor Market Information Division, Employment Development Department.

Trends

This occupation will grow at an average rate compared with all other occupations during the projections period. This growth will be fueled in large measure by the increased demand for new housing in California. The increasing complexity of construction projects should boost demand for management-level personnel within the construction industry as sophisticated technology and the proliferation of laws setting standards for building and construction materials, worker safety, energy efficiency, and environmental protection have further complicated the construction process.

Training/Requirements/Apprenticeships

In the past, those pursuing construction management positions have done so after working for a number of years as construction craftworkers (carpenters, electricians, masons, or plumbers, etc.) or after having been construction supervisors or owners of specialty contracting firms supervising workers in one or more construction trades. More and more employers (big construction firms, in particular) now prefer those who combine work experience in the construction trades with a bachelor’s degree in construction science, construction management, or civil engineering.

Many colleges and universities offer four-year degree programs in construction management, construction science, and construction engineering. Graduates from four-year degree programs usually are hired as assistants to project managers, field engineers, schedulers, or cost estimators. An increasing number of graduates in related fields (e.g. engineering or architecture) also enter construction management, often after acquiring substantial experience on construction projects or after completing graduate studies in construction management or building science. Some colleges and universities have a master’s degree program in construction management or construction science.

Some seeking work as a Construction Manager attend training and educational programs sponsored by industry associations, often in collaboration with postsecondary institutions. A number of community colleges nationwide offer construction management or construction technology programs.

Construction Managers

Construction Careers

Although certification is not required for this occupation, either locally or on a national basis, there is a felt need to certify that Construction Managers have the knowledge, skill, and experience to do a competent job. The American Institute of Constructors (AIC) and the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA) have voluntary programs for certification of Construction Managers. Both certification programs combine written examinations with verification of education and experience.

Recommended High School Course Work

Employers look for Construction Manager applicants who have, at the very least, a high school diploma. High school preparation should include courses in drafting, algebra, geometry, physical sciences, and English.

Where Do I Find the Job?

Direct application to employers is an effective job search method for Construction Managers. Public sector openings are listed with the personnel/human resource departments of cities and counties. California's State Personnel Board posts job opportunities within state government on their Web site at www.spb.ca.gov.

Use the *Search for Employers by Industry* feature on the *Career Center* page at www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov to locate employers in your area. Search using keywords from the following construction industry names to get a list of private firms and their addresses:

- ▶ Architectural Services
- ▶ Commercial Building
- ▶ Drafting Services
- ▶ Engineering Services
- ▶ Industrial Building
- ▶ Landscape Architectural Services
- ▶ New Multifamily Housing
- ▶ New Single-Family Housing
- ▶ Residential Remodelers

For local listings of contractors, search these **yellow page** headings for listings of private firms:

- ▶ Construction Consultants
- ▶ Construction Management

Where Can The Job Lead?

Depending upon work performance and the size and type of firm for which they work, Construction Managers may advance to become top-level managers or executives. Those with thorough experience may become independent consultants. Some Construction Managers serve as expert witnesses in court or as arbitrators in disputes. Some establish their own construction management services, specialty contracting, or general contracting company.

Other Sources of Information

American Institute of Constructors, Constructors Certification Commission
www.constructorcertification.org

Construction Management Association of America
www.cmaanet.org

American Council for Construction Education
www.acce-hq.org

EDD Employment
Development
Department
State of California

LMID
Labor Market Information Division
"Your Information Source"